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To the Graduate Program:

This project, entitled "The Importance of Technological Preparedness and Technology Use in the Adult ELL Classroom" and written by Emily Allen, is presented to the Graduate Program of Greensboro College. I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts with a Major in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.

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Michelle Plaisance, Advisor

We have reviewed this
Project and recommend its
acceptance

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THE IMPORTANCE OF TECHNOLOGICAL PREPAREDNESS AND TECHNOLOGY USE IN THE ADULT ELL CLASSROOM

Presented to
The Graduate Program
of
Greensboro College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in
Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

by
Emily Allen

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Advisor: Michelle Plaisance

Abstract

Educational technology has become an integral part of the English language classroom. The benefits to including technology into curricula are great. Yet, many adult English Language Learner (ELL) educators feel hesitant or unprepared to introduce new or updated educational technology into their classrooms. Due to the recent worldwide pandemic, many adult ELL educators have made the mandatory shift to completely online instruction with little to no face-to-face learning. With the recent mass shift to online learning, it has been made clear how similarly unprepared ELL educators were for such a transition. This paper explains why it is important that adult ELL educators be prepared to use technology not only in times of crisis, but it normal, everyday times, as well. Additionally, this paper presents the benefits of using technology in adult ELL classrooms, and also attempts to explain why so many educators hesitate to implement them in the first place.

Dedication

I would like to my family for supporting me as I was writing this thesis, especially my mother and my sisters, who supported and encouraged me throughout my entire educational career, even when I was being difficult. These were very challenging and incredibly uncertain times and I never would have been able to do this without all of you.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Since the beginning of this year, education and the process of learning as a whole has been going through a drastic evolution. Students and their teachers have been turning to online learning in extraordinary numbers. What was once an option has now been made mandatory. While the realm of online learning itself is nothing new, such widespread use has put a strain on educators and students alike. While I have not yet taught a full, in person classroom, I have been able to bear witness to the difficulties that educators are currently facing and have been facing when it comes to technology in the classroom. It has been brought to light just how unprepared our educators can be when it comes to technology, especially language teachers who primarily relied on face to face interaction in their teaching.

Not only are language teachers sometimes unprepared in times of drastic change, but they are also unprepared in normal, everyday times when it comes to using technology in a face-to-face classroom, as well. As we are shifting into *unprecedented times* and into a *new normal*, educators now more than ever should be able to access resources that will help prepare them to use supplemental, educational technology in completely precedented times as well as extraordinary.

For my final project, I built a website that acts as this resource – as well as a gateway to other resources – so that educators can easily navigate the maze of information in the digital front and find the information they need in a straightforward and user-friendly setting. Seeing how my goal is to teach older, adult students, the

website will address the needs of educators of adult English Language Learners. I also endeavor to share the importance of preparing educators more thoroughly in the realm of technology for everyday classroom use as we move forward into the future.

As Fuchs and Akbar stated in their 2009 article, "Since the lines between traditional and online learning contexts have become increasingly blurred, the ongoing call to equip teachers with the skills to teach with technology seems more important than ever" (p. 157). Since 2009, that call has continued, especially with the closing of campuses and language academies and the sudden shift to online classes. Ensuring that educators are better prepared for this kind of shift is important because it can ease the shock of such drastic change and allow educators to ease their students into the sudden transition as well.

Aside from sudden change, steady use of technology in the classroom can be beneficial on the whole. Fuchs and Akbar (2009) argued that using technology in the classroom, such as computers, tablets, etcetera, can create "authentic materials" (p. 161) and further engage students in different, meaningful manners. Ball (2011) argued that students can greatly benefit from the ability to follow lessons at their own pace instead of trying to catch up with the class and fear falling behind. Ball continued her argument by stating, " [Students] can repeat exercises as they choose, or move on to the next items. They can determine which activities are most important to their needs and focus on those" (p. 13). Both of these arguments have been made on behalf of adult ELLs and their teachers.

Technology use in classrooms is nothing new. Teachers have been utilizing overhead projectors, SMARTboards, and the general Internet for many years. However, according to Chun, Kern, and Smith (2016):

> By defining technology narrowly in terms of computers and other digital devices, rather than as a broad spectrum of mediational resources, it is easy to forget the great extent to which language teachers rely on many other forms of technology ranging from writing to audio recordings, images, and film (p. 64).

More often than not, educators must think creatively when it comes to using technology in their classrooms. An example may be to promote and build listening skills. Teachers may show a TedEd video to their students and quiz them on its contents. Another example is students using a computer or tablet to record their voices and play back the recording to listen to their pronunciation and repeat this process until they are satisfied (Ball, 2011).

The technological possibilities are seemingly endless. However, it would be of great benefit to teachers and students alike if the teachers were better prepared and were given appropriate resources to put technology to good use. According to Ball (2011) when one searches *adult ESL* through Google, more than four million results are shown. While that seems promising, often times educators must wade through that formidable number of search results to try and find what they are looking for. This is why it is important to have a resource – in this case in the form of a website – that allows educators to access the information, activities, lesson plans, etc. that they need for their

specific class without being overwhelmed by the all the search results. Thus, my hope for this website is that it will allow educators to find what they need when they need it without the struggle.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

For this chapter, I review the relevant sources and scholarship related to technological preparedness in English language teachers of adult students to connect to my idea of the importance of such preparedness, as well as a general point of view in relation to new educational technology. Much of the debate centers around not only the use of technology in the adult English language classroom but also around whether it not it is of any actual use. Because of this, I also present what are essentially the *pros* and *cons* of technology use in the adult ELL classroom. Following this, I share *how* to best use technology in an adult ELL classroom in a way that is meaningful to the students and aids in their learning.

Technological Preparedness in Adult English Language Instructors

Attitudes and Motivations

While using technology in classrooms is certainly nothing new, the attitudes and motivations of teachers and educators using said technology has shifted throughout the years. During the advent of such an introduction, adult educators in general were largely among the last group of educators to receive new technology in the classroom along with the necessary training in order to effectively use it (Ball, 2011). A prevalent way of thinking often included the belief that learning how to use this new technology, to be prepared to use it in the classroom, took far too much time for any measure of effectiveness as well as was far too difficult to adequately learn in time (Hopey, 1999, as cited in Ball, 2011). In regard to adult ELL students themselves, according to

McClanahan (2014), “Other barriers stem from the assumptions by ESL program managers and instructors that their learners are too old to learn technology, or they do not own or have access to computers or Internet connectivity (p. 22).” Yet, since 2008 more and more adult ELL students gained better and more steady access to technology and Internet connectivity (McClanahan, 2014).

According to Abdullah, Abidin, Luan, Majid, and Atan (2006), “… many teachers naturally gravitate towards the more familiar methods they remember from their own experience as students (p.57).” Because of this, they argue, there is a greater hesitance, especially on the part of older, veteran educators, in learning how to use new educational technology, let alone adopting it into their classrooms. This does not mean that the older methods that may be in use are wrong, per se. Rather it is vital that educators, especially language teachers, must adapt and grow. The variation of classroom experience prior to the technology being employed can add to the experience and create a diverse educational experience for students. This can definitely benefit adult students as, along with their teachers, they, too, have had varying experience with technology as well as their respective educations (Abdullah et. al, 2006).

To add to the hesitation, new technology can also carry a hefty price tag. In the year 1999, technology to contend with in the classroom primarily composed of early forms of accessible personal computers, such as the popular IBM PC 5150. Though at nearly $1,565 —without any drives— they were not commonly found in classrooms (Agar, 2006). The Internet was available —though in its early incarnation— as well as a

rudimentary photoshop program. But with each introduction of new piece of technology to the market came its eventual presence within the classroom. According to Ball (2011):

> Quill pens evolved to fountain pens and then ballpoints. The abacus became a calculator. Typewriters were replaced by desktop computers. Each new invention has led to significant instructional shifts for educators (p. 12).

And with so many different types of new technology being introduced in such a short amount of time, teachers can often feel overwhelmed with not only trying to learn how to use this new technology but also in choosing which ones best suit their classes' and students' needs. With the rise of machine translation apps, such as Google Translate, and language learning programs, such as Rosetta Stone or Duolingo, some English language teachers may feel as though they have extra competition (Clifford, Mershcel, Munné, 2013).

According to Fuchs and Akbar (2013), "… the lines between traditional and online language learning contexts have become increasingly blurred… (p. 157)." Along with the use of educational technology in a traditional, face-to-face classroom are purely online classes, primarily for distance learning. As of 2020, there are a host of websites that colleges and some institutions and academies use for their online classes. These include sites such as Moodle, BlackBoard, and Canvas (Ball, 2011). While online classes have been held on these sites for many years now, many English language educators prefer an in-person medium with their students. Many instructors feel as though there is a necessary component to language learning that is lost through online classes.

Additionally, educators may believe that if there is insignificant interaction between the educator and the students or the students amongst each other then they will not be able to attain satisfactory results, as well as a strong feeling of isolation (Haythornthwaite & Kazmer, 2002, as cited by Ge, 2012).

While veteran educators may be hesitant to implement new educational technology in their classrooms, younger educators with more outside technological experience find that the use of these new tools supplements their lessons as well as engage their students (Fuchs & Akbar, 2013). The key to the acceptance of new educational technology is, in fact, whether or not the educator in question feels *prepared* to use it. Younger educators with more informal technological experience have a bit of a foundation to work with when learning the ins and outs of something new. A teacher may be presented with the benefits of new technology but if they have no idea on how to use it effectively, then it can only add to the hesitance they may initially feel (McClanahan, 2014).

The Importance of Teacher Preparation and Effective Resources

As long as new technology is being put out and sought to be implemented into classrooms, workshops and teacher training has been the main mode of receiving up-to-date information on new educational technology. New technology is being introduced to the market astonishingly fast. As more and more advanced technology makes its way into homes and offices, so too will they make their way into classrooms. It is an inevitability that all educators, language and general education alike, must reckon with. Computers in

general hold an influence on not only people's personal lives but their professional, as well. Gilakjani and Leong (2012) state that, "… the teacher is the key to effective implementation of the use of computers in the educational system (p. 630)." It is therefore the educators themselves that will ultimately determine whether or not the implementation of any one piece of educational technology in the classroom is successful. If the teacher is confident, the students are confident. If teacher is open to using new technology, the students are open, and learning is enhanced (Inverso, Kobrin, & Hasmi, 2017).

However, as many educators across the globe find themselves attempting to traverse new territory that comes with this *new normal*, it has become a challenge for teachers and educators worldwide. According to Vanek (2020), "… the coronavirus has instantly forced 1.9B students and teachers worldwide, effectively 70% of total enrolled learners and their educators, online (p. 1)." While traditional learning and online learning had begun to converge and more and more classes were being taught online, this shift to a purely online educational experience for many students —and educators— has been jarring. As stated above, there are many concerns and hesitancies about simply using technology in a face-to-face classroom, let alone moving to purely online, distance learning. "These are still valid concerns," Vanek (2020) stated, "yet today, because of the pandemic, reticence about moving online in no longer an option (p. 2)."

Students who are not used to learning primarily online may also be experiencing a strain on their education. Many adult students are now working from home as well as trying to aid their children in their own now online education. Some students may not

have the online experience which makes certain aspects such as time management and selecting resources a challenge. Vanek (2020) warns that, “While this is a unique opportunity to push learners toward more digital literacy, be wary of the cognitive load required (p. 4).” Indeed, the cognitive load is something to keep in mind for both educators *and* their students. With adequate training and preparation, the strain due to that load can be significantly decreased and the transition to the use of new educational technology is made much smoother (Vanek, 2020).

However, the attitudes, motivations, willingness, and potential implementation of these technologies mean very little if there is not appropriate funding to support not only the acquisition of these technologies but also the training educators need in order to use them (Carter, 2017). Educators and their students doubtlessly need support from their schools, programs, academies, etcetera. A strong foundation is required. Carter (2017) states that:

> The reason we do not have them is not because the program don’t work, but because we invest so little in adult education is this country, and what little we do invest at the federal level (our largest source of funding for adult education) has been dropping dramatically over the last 15 years (p. 54).

There are approximately 36 million adult students in the United States. However, federal funding is only applicable to about 1.5 million (Carter, 2017). Of those 1.5 million students, as of 2015, 660,000 are English language learners (Jaros-White, 2017). After

the completion of the 2020 census, up to date numbers of adult English language learners will be made available.

Use of Technology in the Classroom

Benefits

There are many benefits to using technology in the adult ELL classroom. More experienced educators enjoy a wide variety of tools that can be used in specific lessons. For example, including a piece of technology could be as simple as using a browser to find pictures of specific examples of vocabulary words. A student teacher involved in Fuchs and Akbar's 2013 study claims, "the use of online corpora has facilitated my students' acquisition of vocabulary (p. 161)."

Using simply the Internet as a supplemental means allows educators some spontaneity should their lesson plans allow it. It can be used as a vocabulary aid, to research for academic papers, and to stay connected to each other after class or in terms of online distance learning (Shyamlee, 2012). Message boards through sites such as Moodle or Canvas allow for conversation amongst peers and their teachers, as well. According to Shyamlee (2012):

> It is fair to assert that the growth of the Internet has facilitated the growth of the English language and that this has occurred at a time when computers are no longer the exclusive domains of the dedicated few, but rather available to many (p 151).

Interactive blackboards allow for physical manipulation which can encourage hands on learning (Slaouti, Onat-Stelma, & Morream, 2017). Technology can also make the learning experience more authentic to students. If a class is doing a project on The Olympics, the educator can bring up clips on YouTube of opening ceremonies. Ball (2011) argued that this improves the quality of the lesson and allows for more of an impact that helps students to understand the lesson better. While working with adult students who are more technologically literate, there is the offer of a way to integrate authentic materials and novel ways to engage students in more meaningful learning (Ball, 2011). This technology has allowed educators more flexibility and allowed for greater adaptation, something greatly needed in multilevel classrooms (Parrish, 2004).

With the use of iPods, tablets, and personal computers, students are able to go through a lesson at their own pace. They can track back or move forward with their understating without fear of falling behind their classmates (Chun, Kern, & Smith, 2016). This allows students to connect with the idea of the lesson fully before moving on to the next. They can check themselves in areas in which they feel they are falling behind. PowerPoint presentations, SmartBoards, and desktop publishing allows for greater organization of lessons. PowerPoint alone can aid students in creating and delivering organized presentations, as well as educators (Honigsfeld, Giouroukakis, Cohan, & Walsh, 2009).

Technology can also aid in the building of skills in multimodal communication. According to Warschauer and Liaw (2010), multimodality an “emerging” technology. This is due to new kinds of applications that allow for large groups of learners without

any formal or specialized technological training to produce their work and share it with their peers. Warschauer and Liaw (2010) also advocated for the use of podcasting. They claimed that, "… podcasts can be a repository of classroom discussions or lectures for use outside of the class to extend and amplify what was covered in class and prepare learners for upcoming classes (p. 3)."

Challenges

While there are many benefits to using technology in the classroom, there are some challenges, as well. These primarily include availability, training, and willingness to use and learn said technology. Integrating new technology, especially with limited training, can overwhelm educators and their lesson plans. While using said piece of technology can allow for flexibility in the classroom, it is only as flexible as the lesson plan allows it to be. Should the lesson plan be given to educators through their programs, this may create conflict in the lessons the educators wish to deliver and their methods of delivery (Ahmadi, 2018).

New technology is being produced, marketed, and used at an unprecedented rate. While this creates a plethora of technological possibilities for educators, this rapid development also carries the risk of new pieces of technology becoming obsolete or needed upgrades quickly. Because of this, there could be a hesitancy in implementing a new piece of technology and integrating it into a lesson plan due to these possibilities (Karich, Burns, & Maki, 2014). This also means that new research based on new educational technology will need to be performed and updated, as well. "There is utility

in reexamining technology because of its ever-changing nature (Cheung & Slavin, 2012, as cited by Karich et al., 2014, p. 406).

Availability of technology to not only educators, but to students can also present a challenge, especially when it comes to distance learning. With classes moved online for many students, the need for steady access to a computer and the Internet is critical. Some adult students do not have this steady access and so they rely on limited computers on few college campuses and in libraries (Van Duzer & Florez, 2003). This dependency creates an added stress upon the students who are trying to balance working from home and aiding in their children's own educations, all at the same time. Educators themselves have had to learn different distance learning technologies almost on their own and at a rapid pace. While throughout the years, there has been a steady implementation of purely online distance learning and in making it a priority, there are still major concerns about their students accessing technology as well as helping them in their lessons (Vanek, 2020). This also brings up the issue of accountability. Can educators adequately hold their students accountable for their individual work if they cannot maintain steady presence?

Examples of Technology Available Today

There is an incredible amount of technology available for use today. The most well known are sites such as YouTube and WhatsApp, as well as programs such as PowerPoint and Microsoft Movie Maker (Warschauer & Liaw, 2010). In the 2013 study done by Fuchs and Akbar, many student teachers in their IEPs used a social media

network called Ning. Through Ning, educators were able to create individualized and customized social networks for their students. Through this, they were able to connect with their students and their students with each other. Sites such as Ning, like WhatsApp and other platforms, allow for supplemental discussion after class as well as creating a network of accountability for students (Coryell & Chlup, 2008).

Applications that allow for speech recognition are available to help students with their individual pronunciations. These applications include the Audacity Audio application as well as e-Lective text-scaffolding software (Warschauer & Liaw, 2010). Skype, Zoom, and Google Hangout have been popular platforms in connecting with students and delivering lessons virtually (Vanek, 2020).

Conclusion

Educational technology can provide great benefits to an adult ELL classroom. The innovations can supplement, aid, and encourage interaction between students. The implementation of such technology, however, is determined by individual programs, funding, and the attitudes and motivations of the educators themselves. It has always been imperative that educators of adult ELLs, who have historically been placed on the back burner in terms of new technology, to receive and have access to this new technology. However, it is more important than ever, with so many students and educators traversing this new way a digital learning. Vanek (2020) claimed that this can be done by:

… starting small and building on the forced innovation in place now during the pandemic, we can reshape the world of adult basic skills and ESOL programming to deliver more flexible, truly personalized, and relevant learning experiences for more adult learners than our programs have had the capacity to reach via the old structures (p.3).”

Chapter 3: Project Design

In this chapter, I explain my project of a website of resource meant primarily for educators of adult English language learners. I also explain why it is necessary for adult ELL educators to have such a resource, especially during the current pandemic where many schools and academies have closed and moved to online learning. While it is important to focus on the effects of technology use during the pandemic, it is also important to note technology use and implementation in standard, face-to-face classes, as well.

New technology is continuously being developed and implemented not only in private homes, but also in classrooms and in education. As educators of all kinds shift into *unprecedented times* and into a *new normal,* educators now more than ever should be able to access resources that will help to prepare them for use supplemental, educational technology in completely precedented times as well as standard. While online learning is nothing new in terms of holding classes, such widespread use has put a strain on students and educators alike. There is also the matter of missing a critical face-to-face communicative component that many language teachers rely on (Fuchs & Akbar, 2013). Because of this, it is imperative that English language educators receive the training and the resources needed to implement technologies that could not only aid in the transition but also supplement existing classes.

According to Vanek (2020), "… the coronavirus has instantly forced 1.9B students and teachers worldwide, effectively 70% of total enrolled learners and their

educators online (p. 1).” Of that number, a significant portion of those students are English language learners. And of those language learners, adult students and their educators have historically been receiving less training and less funding in technology than their general counterparts (Ball, 2011; Mathews-Aydinli, 2008). Because of this, the mandatory shift to online learning has been especially challenging for adult ELLs and their educators due to a lack of cohesive resources, especially considering how programs and training for adult ELL educators before this shift still were not meeting the needs of the students and their teachers (Vanek, 2020). Therefore, it is vital that adult ELL educators have at least a resource they can turn to should they need help understanding or implementing a specific piece of educational technology in their traditional and/or online classes.

Thus, this final project is a website for adult ELL educators that acts as that resource, as well as a gateway to other resources. The goal of the website is to provide educators with a resource that will help them to navigate the maze of information in the digital front and find the information they need in a straightforward and user-friendly setting. It is also a hope that one day this website could involve into a kind of sharing platform amongst adult ELL educators to share their thoughts and ideas, as well as how they use technology in their own classrooms, and what their preferences might be.

A secondary purpose for this project is to showcase how educational technology can be greatly beneficial in an adult ELL classroom. A common teaching philosophy among English language teachers is the necessity of making a lesson meaningful to the students. This can mean integrating their L1 or their native culture into the lesson as a

way to provide solid connections that the students can then build off of (Chinnery, 2006). For example, an adult ELL educator can use the Internet as a supplemental means and assist with lessons on vocabulary or to aid in the search of credible research for academic papers. Online message boards, like Moodle or WhatsApp, can allow teachers and their students to stay reliably connected after class (Shyamlee, 2012). The website for the final project can perhaps become a host to a messaging board that allows educators to communicate with one another and foster connections.

New technology is constantly being introduced to the market and into classrooms, as well as upgrades to existing models. As long as new technology is being put out, training and resources needed to implement them into classrooms need to be updated and offered to educators of all kinds. With proper training and availability, educators will be able to use new technologies with confidence which will enhance learning for their students in ways that can offer flexibility and spontaneity wherever the lesson plan allows.

Chapter 4: Project

The project made for this research is a website about using technology — primarily the Internet— in the adult ELL classroom. This website attempts to provide some resources that adult ELL educators can turn to if they need help navigating different facets of technology that can be used in their classrooms and for distance learning. Eventually, the website can branch out and allow adult ELL educators to share their thoughts, questions, or activities they do in their own classrooms. For now, however, it is a resource that can be updated as more relevant technology becomes available. The website focuses on internet activities, internet safety and security, distance learning, and sample plans. The internet activities, distance learning, and sample lesson plans each have drop-down menus that direct the user to more information relating to the topic. This website can be found at adultelltech.weebly.com.

The tab marked simply as "Home" opens the website with a short declaration of the purpose and reason for this website's existence. It relates how since the beginning of this year, there have been drastic changes to the face of education. While online learning through sites such as Moodle or Canvas is not new or unhear of in the TESOL field, it has not seen such widespread use as it is now. An increasing number of students and teachers have been ushered into online platforms to continue classes and courses. So much so, that it is easy to see how many adult ELL educators feel as though they were overwhelmingly underprepared for such a drastic shift (Vanek, 2020). Thus, this website is an attempt to accumulate and conglomerate relevant information directed specifically at adult ELL educators as a way to help ease the tension and confusion created by this

mass shift online. The idea of the layout of the website is to be as user-friendly as possible. The "Home" page then goes on to describe what the website contains.

The second tab after "Home" is "Internet Activities." The Internet has a prominent role in this website due to its more accessible nature and its ability to be accessed and used outside of the classroom. Traditionally, many students have been able to access the Internet outside of the classroom, even if they did not own a personal computer themselves. This makes the Internet a source of critical technology that can be utilized as a supplement to a lesson (Moore, 2009). Due to the spread of COVID-19, many students have been working from home and/or trying to help with their children's online education, as well. Therefore, the asynchronous nature of many online classes allows for students to have more freedom in their learning process (Ge, 2011). While there are some activities that must be done synchronously, such as the Kahoots! quiz, most have an asynchronous nature which will allow students to complete activities at their own pace and own time within the appropriate time limit.

The activities chosen for this website target two specific sets of skills: speaking and listening. They are also more geared toward adult students and learners with advanced English proficiency. While speaking and listening are the two highlighted skills, several activities promote a combination of skills that accompany these two skills, such as reading and writing. This is a testament to the versatility of the Internet as a supplemental tool. Rosen (1991) remarked on the potential benefits that the Internet could have specifically in the instruction of adult literacy for ELLs. Since 1991 the amount of resources for ELL instruction has increased significantly and adult ELL

educators can turn to the Internet to find activities that target specific skills or a blending of skills.

The introductory page offers three websites that educators can use to supplement the activities. They are websites that are highlighted the most because they can be applied to any of the lessons and activities that are presented on the website. The websites are ESL Fast, English Media Lab, and My Speech Class. ESL Fast is traditionally geared toward younger ELLs however, the website also has reading activities that can be used for older, higher level students under the "For Intermediate Learners" header. The website offers essays and practice paragraphs that students can read and test their English comprehension. Many of the essays have a storytelling element to them, meaning that some have a personal element to them. According to Kim and McGarry (2014):

> In addition to the apparent universality of telling stories, human stories tend to evoke universal themes accessible to second language learners (Hines, 1995). As Jones (2001) argues, since research as well as common experience demonstrates that storytelling is a very common activity among conversing adults, second language learners need instruction in storytelling to add to their linguistic competence (p. 15).

The Internet is filled with personal stories and storytelling in general. Therefore, the Internet can be an incredibly useful tool in finding stories that adult ELLs can relate to — such as "English for New USA Immigrants— which, in turn, allows the lesson to become

meaningful to them (Ko, Schallert, & Walters, 2003). ESL Fast allows educators to access different essays and stories that are suitable to ELLs of specific proficiency levels.

English Media Lab is the second website given. This website focuses on English exercises and activities for specific purposes and settings, such as business settings and social situations. Arnó-Macià (2012) argued that the building of general skills that technology offers can be refined to target specific skills for specific situations. These situations include business meetings, trials in court, and so on. English Media Lab encourages the use of English in these specialized settings. This is especially important to adult ELLs as they are more likely to be included in these settings much sooner than young ELLs. Arnó-Macià (2012) also stated, "… technology provides new opportunities for immersion in real situations, which are becoming more and more realistic in communities that are emerging in virtual environments (p. 94)."

The third website, My Speech Lab, is an example of this specialized use due to its specific nature. This website consists primarily of topics that educators can use for speeches, debates, and essays. It includes persuasive, argumentative, and research topics, as well as tips and examples that students can use when writing and, eventually, delivering their presentations. Their list is extensive, and it is a good place to start when searching for appropriate topics —both for the classroom and proficiency level— for student presentations.

The activities chosen on the website focus primarily on building speaking and listening skills. There are many activities that students can do online to build their

reading and writing skills (Stites, 2003). Students can read passages given to them by their teachers and answer questions thoroughly and with the correct grammar. Activities that target speaking and listening that can be done entirely online may not be as readily accessible (Moore, 2009).

There are three activities presented that focus on building speaking skills, which include pronunciation and dictation. The first activity starts simply with online conversations. They can be done through video conferencing, if the class, or a portion of it, is synchronous. This activity makes for an effective warm-up by introducing a random, appropriate topic to engage students in conversation with one another. The topics presented can introduce new vocabulary or build upon existing vocabulary (Ball, 2011). With this activity, there are links to generators that provide random topics, questions, and news articles whose comprehensive difficulties can be adjusted depending on the targeted proficiency. There is also a link to an activity called "What Happens Next?" where students can guess and discuss how a short video ends. The other activities are "Correct the Mistake" and "Poetry Reading." With "Correct the Mistake", students are given a sentence spoken by the teacher that contains inaccuracies. It is then up to the student to record themselves saying the sentence with the appropriate corrections. "Poetry Reading" is exactly that: students reading a poem either given by the teacher or written on their own so that their peers can submit any corrections about their enunciation, pronunciation, or dictation.

For the listening skills, there are two activities that can be done either online or in a face-to-face classroom. The major activities are listening skills that require students to

watch a video or listen to a passage given to them by the teacher. Teachers can then have students discuss what they have listened to in order to include a speaking component to the activity if they wish. After the have watched the video or listened to the passage, students are then required to answer questions about what they listened to as accurately and comprehensively as possible. The other activity combines listening and writing skills as students are required to transcribe passages or sentences. By doing this, students can gain active learning skills which then can be used outside of the classroom, as well (Arnó-Macià, 2012; Ball, 2011).

The third tab is dedicated to internet safety and security. While the Internet is home to a plethora of resources and activities, it can also be home to scams and security risks. While seeking to use the Internet as a consistent tool in any classroom setting, it is imperative to recognize potential dangers on the Internet and learn how to lessen the risk or avoid it all together (Wishart, 2004). Some risks that can be posed through the Internet include phishing, accidentally downloading malware, and stolen personal information. What may be a promising link could potentially be instead a virus that can then be downloaded onto and ravage a personal computer. On this page, there is a list of common practices that any teacher can benefit from turning into a habit. This includes not clicking on unknown or suspicious links; avoiding giving out personal information; investing in antivirus software; and checking privacy settings on social media sites.

Another danger that students and teachers can encounter on the Internet is misinformation. There is seemingly an endless amount of information hosted on the Internet. However, a veritable surfeit of that information can be biased to the point of

inaccuracy or completely false. When researching, it is a responsibility of both student and teacher to perform their due diligence when choosing resources. A method on how to exercise this due diligence comes in the form of the CRAAP test. Despite its humorous and someone crude name, this test encourages the use of critical thinking skills when it comes to determining the validity of a source that a student —or teacher— wishes to use (Wichowski & Kohl, 2013). The CRAAP acronym stands for currency, relevance, authority, accuracy, and purpose. By employing this test, students and teachers use critical thinking skills and avoid using outdated, biased, or inaccurate information.

The fourth tab includes answers to frequently asked questions and tutorials on how to use common online software for distance learning. The software includes video conferencing services including Zoom and Skype. Also included are brief tutorials on how to build a class via Moodle, BlackBoard, and Canvas, which are three of the more popular learning management platforms. The different tabs include step-by-step instructions on how to build a class via slideshow as well as a video that educators can use to follow along. While many teachers have been turning to such learning management platforms due to the shift to distance learning only, there are benefits to using platforms such as Moodle and BlackBoard. According to Sarrab, Al-Shihi, and Rehman (2013):

> … [mobile] learning can support ubiquitous learning and can make the education process more comfortable and flexible… Both teachers and students need a proper and handy system to interact with each other and facilitate the teaching

> system… Therefore, it can be said that [mobile] learning is the future of distance education (p. 828).

Sarrab et. al (2013) argued that learning management platforms are key in enabling the successful implementation of mobile learning. The arguments in favor of the benefits of mobile learning are similar to the arguments of the benefits of technology as a whole.

The last tab consists of three sample lesson plans that educators can use either online or in face-to-face classes. They include lesson plans on the listening quiz using a short, educational video by TedEd, online research for debates, and a quiz created and delivered through the game-based learning platform, Kahoot!. The sample lesson plan included was created for a listening quiz based on a brief video by TedEd.

Lesson Plan: TedEd Listening Quiz

Content-Based Central Focus: SWBAT effectively listen to a short video, recall its contents, and apply previously learned vocabulary
Daily Content Objective: SWBAT watch a short TedEd video and take a quiz about it
Daily Language Objective: Students will improve on their listening skills with a short, education video to be able to use in the future in lectures and business meetings

Language Function: Students will individually take a short quiz to determine how much they understood.	Academic Vocabulary and Language Demands: • Ancient • Destiny • Expand/Expansion • Irrigation • Elaborate • Sacred • Offshoot/Runoff • Enlightenment • Reverence • Urban • Contaminate • Mineral Deposit • Evaporating/-ing • Agriculture • Conversely • In concert • Retain/Absorb • Toxins • Porous • Infrastructure
Language Supports: Students will watch the video two times and discuss what they learned among each other before the quiz	
Materials/Technology Used: The teacher will use YouTube to bring up the video	

Activity	**Description of Activity and Setting (Student Engagement)**	**Time**
Focus or Review:	The class will begin by going over previously learned vocabulary	10 min

Teacher Input:	The teacher will describe the activity and clarify any confusion on the vocabulary words before starting the video	5 min
Guided Practice/Application:	Students will now watch the video two separate times: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zarll9bx6FI After watching the video, students will discuss its contents and what they learned.	15 min
Independent Practice/Application:	Students will now be given a short quiz consisting of five questions	20 min
Formative/Summative Assessment Methods:	Groupwork is done as a formative assessment to evaluate how well students can listen and respond to each other. The quiz will act as a summative assessment to determine what the students learned from the activities.	
Closure:	When students are finished with their quizzes, they will discuss the questions and the answers they had.	10 min
Next Steps: When the discussion is completed, they will be given a new set of vocabulary words for the next video quiz.		

There are currently only three sample lesson plans available on the website. The home tab for the lesson plans state that in time, the website will be a place where other adult ELL educators can share their ideas, lesson plans, and activities. It is a major endeavor to transform the website into this sharing platform. Not only will educators be able to share ideas, lesson plans, and activities, but they will also be able to ask questions and answer them. There has been substantial evidence and documentation that collaboration between teachers is key to the improvement of student learning (DelliCarpini, 2008; Guiney, 2001; as cited in Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010). Collaboration is common among educators in their respective fields to the great benefit of their students. The final stage of this website is to be a nexus of that collaboration and a place where adult ELL educators can create connections and communicate with one another.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This year has shown the immense importance of technology in education. It has also shown how important it is that adult ELL educators be prepared to use technology, especially relating to distance learning. Students cannot afford to have their education put on hold because of ill preparation. Therefore, educators must be provided accessible means and resources in order to increase their preparation so that any sudden transition into online learning can go smoothly and with as little instruction is lost as possible.

New technology is being created, improved, and implemented into classroom nearly every term. This can come at a great advantage to educators if they are willing to learn how to use this technology and include it in their lesson plans (Fuchs & Akbar, 2013). However, teacher motivation is a crucial part in the implementation of technology into a classroom. While it may seem effective to gravitate towards methods that are familiar and have already been done before to some degree of success, language teachers must be able to be prepared to adapt to the introduction of new educational technology (Abdullah, Abidin, Luan, Majid, & Atan, 2006). If language teachers are more open to the use of technology, then they are more motivated and willing which can reflect positively on their students and the new technology can be effectively used to its highest extent.

However, an obstacle to improving teacher preparation, as well as motivation, is funding. New educational technology is often expensive to acquire and implement. Teachers may even need to attend workshops in order to learn how to use it properly. A

single SMART Board can cost anywhere from $1,500 to $6,500, depending on model and capabilities (Smart Board Cost, 2018). Apps and programs often require a subscription to use. Though many companies are offering free use of their apps and software because of the pandemic and the sudden shift to online learning, these offers will not last forever. Even with these free subscriptions, many apps and software are geared toward younger learners and very few specialize in English language learning (Vanek, 2020).

Therefore, it is vital that adult ELL educators be able to access a free, comprehensive resource that can direct them to the materials or answers they need for their classrooms. This can be done through collaboration among educators who are willing to share their knowledge, questions, answers, or activities with one another. This is something that I have repeatedly witnessed throughout my time working with adult ELLs. Very often, educators will collaborate, work together, and share their experience in order to create more inclusive and meaningful lessons for their adult students. This energy can be directed into the use of technology. The collaboration does not need to end simply because we are not in the same building for the moment. I have learned this very important lesson throughout my time working on this project.

With this final project, my goal was to create a free, easy to navigate resource that help make the sudden transition to online learning even a little easier for adult ELL educators. By answering frequently asked questions and offering activities for specific skills using technology is a good start. However, that is all it is: A start. To attain my goal of a comprehensive resource that answers questions I could not requires collaboration between colleagues and coworkers. This is not a project that can reach its full potential

alone. I hope to see my website grow from what it currently is into a center of collaboration for adult ELL educators to find what they are looking for in an easy and straightforward manner all without pay walls or subscriptions. With collaboration come preparation and with preparation comes increased motivation. With this motivation, adult ELL educators can implement any educational technology they wish to in their classrooms and create meaningful, enriching, and unique lessons and activities for their students.

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